

Native shrubs include wild plums and chokecherries, found throughout Nebraska. A variety of flowers, such as goldenrod, larkspur, columbine, wild roses and sunflowers, thrive throughout the state.

Before white settlers arrived in Nebraska, buffalo and beaver populations were significant. Today, buffalo are never seen outside game preserves. The beaver population, after being diminished by trappers, has become more plentiful in recent years. Other animals in Nebraska include white-tail and mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, antelope, bobcats, foxes, coyotes, badgers, squirrels, prairie dogs, muskrats, skunks, raccoons, rabbits and opossums.

Game birds, especially pheasants, grouse, ducks, geese and quail, are plentiful in Nebraska. The state's waters yield a variety of fish, including bass, carp, catfish, crappie, perch, pike, trout and walleye. The Platte River and lakes in the Sandhills serve as "rest stops" for many migratory birds, including the famous Sandhill cranes (see previous page).

Another migration rest stop of international significance is the Rainwater Basin district in south-central Nebraska. Within this district, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages more than 23,000 acres of wetlands and adjacent tall-grass prairie to provide habitat for migratory birds and resident wildlife.²²

ECONOMY²³

Agriculture

Nebraska's economy revolves around its agriculture industry. In 2007, 93 percent of the state's land — 45.6 million acres — was farm and ranch land.

Producers have taken advantage of the state's fertile soil, abundant water, intensive cultivation and advanced farming methods to produce record-high crop yields in recent years. In 2006, gross cash receipts from farm marketing totaled over \$12 billion, and Nebraska had 47,300 farms.

Crop Production²⁴

Nebraska is a national leader in crop production. In 2007, Nebraska led the nation in production of Great Northern beans, grown in the western one-third of the state, and in popcorn production. The state ranked second in pinto bean and proso millet production; third in corn for grain production; fourth in all dry edible bean and grain sorghum production; fifth in alfalfa hay production; sixth in soybean production; and seventh in winter wheat and all hay production. Sugar beets and potatoes also play a significant role in the state's agricultural economy.

²² For more information about the Rainwater Basin Wetland Management District and national wildlife refuges in Nebraska, see Page 151.

²³ Information for this section compiled from the following sources: Nebraska Department of Agriculture; Nebraska Department of Economic Development; Nebraska Department of Labor; Bureau of Economic Analysis and Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce; Bureau of Business Research, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; *Fortune* magazine.

²⁴ See Page 469 for a complete set of Nebraska's rankings in agriculture production.

Nebraska's top cash crop is corn. Each year, more than 8 million acres of the state's land is planted in corn. The state's livestock, poultry and ethanol industries are the largest corn consumers.

Products relating to agriculture, such as irrigation systems and farm equipment, are manufactured in the state. Agricultural businesses are an important part of Nebraska's economy, with one in three jobs in the state relating to the agricultural industry.

Livestock Production

Nebraska also is a leader in livestock production. In 2007, livestock production and livestock products were a \$7.6 billion industry. In 2007, Nebraska ranked first nationally in commercial red meat production; second in all cattle on feed and commercial cattle slaughter; third in cash receipts from all livestock and livestock products and in all cattle and calves; and sixth in all hogs and pigs on farms and in commercial hog slaughter.

Turkey, poultry, dairy, sheep and goat production add diversity and play an important role in the state's economy.



Cattle Ranching in Nebraska

Other Industries

Although agriculture dominates Nebraska's economy, more of Nebraska's income has come from other industries in recent years.

Manufacturing, which employed almost 400,000 workers in 2005, is a major employer among nonfarm industries, with most manufacturing sites located in the state's large urban areas. Douglas, Lancaster, Hall and Platte counties employ almost 49,000 workers in manufacturing. Food processing is the leading type of manufacturing, followed by the manufacturing of machinery and fabricated metal products.

The service sector, which includes health services and business services, generates the most earnings in Nebraska. Government ranks second in earnings generated, while manufacturing is third.

The service sector also employs more workers than any other industry. Government jobs, many of which are in Lincoln, employ the second-highest number of workers. Wholesale and retail trades, taken together, employ the third-highest number of workers, with general merchandise stores being the largest employer among retail establishments in the state.

Lincoln is a major employer in education, led by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and other institutions of higher education. Omaha is a major center for food processing, healthcare, insurance, trade, transportation and telecommunications. Livestock and grain exchanges also are in Nebraska's largest city.

Four Nebraska-based businesses are in the Fortune 500, *Fortune* magazine's annual list of the largest industrial and service corporations in the United States based on revenue. These four are:

- Berkshire Hathaway, a diversified holding and investment firm
- Union Pacific, a railway network operating in the western two-thirds of the United States
- ConAgra, a food processing and marketing company
- Peter Kiewit Sons', an engineering and construction firm

These corporations have their headquarters in Omaha.

Many other Fortune 500 companies have major operations in Nebraska. Rounding out the top 10 are TD Ameritrade, securities; Cabela's, specialty retailers; Nelnet, diversified financials; West, diversified outsourcing services and Werner Enterprises, trucking and truck leasing.

Fortune 500 Companies Based in Nebraska, 2008²⁵

Company	Headquarters	Fortune 500 Rank	Revenues
Berkshire Hathaway	Omaha	11	\$118,245,000,000
Union Pacific	Omaha	154	16,283,000,000
ConAgra	Omaha	210	12,756,000,000
Peter Kiewit Sons'	Omaha	385	6,237,000,000

²⁵ Source: *Fortune* magazine, May 5, 2008.



Union Pacific Railroad Cars in North Platte's Bailey Yard

Largest Public Employers in Nebraska, 2005²⁶

Employer	Location	Employees
State of Nebraska Government (excluding university)	Statewide	18,653
U.S. Government (excluding Department of Defense)	Statewide	15,403
U.S. Air Force/Offutt	Omaha	11,137*
Omaha Public Schools	Omaha	8,073**
Lincoln Public Schools	Lincoln	5,900*
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Lincoln	4,915
University of Nebraska Medical Center	Omaha	3,411
City of Omaha	Omaha	2,800*
City of Lincoln	Lincoln	2,746*
Millard Public Schools	Millard	2,498*
Douglas County	Omaha	2,404*
Omaha Public Power District	Omaha	2,354
Nebraska Public Power District	Columbus	2,153
Central Community College	Grand Island	1,672*
University of Nebraska at Omaha	Omaha	1,328
Lancaster County	Lincoln	1,255*
US Veterans Hospital	Omaha	1,199
Air and Army National Guard	Lincoln	923*
University of Nebraska at Kearney	Kearney	893

²⁶ Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Omaha World-Herald. Those public employee numbers designated with an asterisk (*) are reported employment numbers in 2003 because 2005 numbers were not available. A double asterisk (**) are reported employment numbers in 2002 because more recent numbers were not available.

Largest Private Employers in Nebraska, 2005²⁷

Employer	Location	Employees
Tyson Foods, Inc.	Dakota City.....	11,000
Wal-Mart.....	Bellevue.....	9,755
Union Pacific Corp.	Omaha.....	7,200
Alegent Health.....	Omaha.....	6,675
First Data Corp.	Omaha.....	6,300
Mutual of Omaha Insurance Co.....	Omaha.....	5,400
Hy-Vee Food Stores.....	Omaha.....	4,843
First National of Nebraska Inc.	Omaha.....	4,651
Nebraska Methodist Health System.....	Omaha.....	4,446
Burlington Northern	Omaha.....	4,400
BryanLGH Medical Center.....	Lincoln.....	4,200
ConAgra Inc.	Omaha.....	4,000
Cabela's Inc.	Sidney.....	3,887
Cargill Inc.	Blair.....	3,504
Swift & Co.	Omaha, Grand Island.....	3,168
Crete Carrier Corp.	Lincoln.....	3,040
Oriental Trading Company.....	Omaha.....	3,000
West Corp.	Omaha.....	2,800
Baker's Supermarkets (Kroger Co.).....	Omaha.....	2,535
Creighton University.....	Omaha.....	2,500
Pamida/Shopko.....	Omaha.....	2,463
St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center.....	Lincoln.....	2,393
Nebraska Furniture Mart.....	Omaha.....	2,166
Becton Dickinson.....	Columbus.....	2,100
B & R Stores Inc.	Lincoln.....	2,011
Smithfield Foods Inc. (formerly Farmland Foods).....	Crete.....	1,857
Qwest Communications.....	Omaha.....	1,850
Target Stores.....	Statewide.....	1,781
Good Samaritan Hospital.....	Kearney.....	1,700
Father Flanagan's Boys & Girls Town.	Omaha.....	1,700
UPS.....	Omaha.....	1,687
Werner Enterprises Inc.	Omaha.....	1,622
Omaha Steaks Inc.	Omaha.....	1,600
Chief Industries Inc.	Grand Island.....	1,600
Valmont Industries Inc.	Omaha.....	1,500
Ameritrade Holding Corp.	Omaha.....	1,500
Children's Hospital.....	Omaha.....	1,428
Buckle Inc.	Kearney.....	1,404
St. Joseph Hospital (Creighton Medical Center).....	Omaha.....	1,350
Hormel Foods Corp.	Fremont.....	1,341
Wells Fargo Bank.....	Omaha.....	1,320
Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.....	Lincoln.....	1,300
Omaha World-Herald.....	Omaha.....	1,300
Commercial Federal Corp.....	Omaha.....	1,266
Marriott Regional Center.....	Omaha.....	1,220
Bag N Save.....	Omaha.....	1,200
Info USA Inc.	Omaha.....	1,200
Runza National.....	Lincoln.....	1,200
CSG Inc.	Omaha.....	1,200
Regional West Medical Center.....	Scottsbluff.....	1,155
St. Francis Medical Center.....	Grand Island.....	1,140
Cox Communications.....	Omaha.....	1,100
Lozier Corp.	Omaha.....	1,100
Ameritas Acacia Mutual Holding Co.	Lincoln.....	1,100
Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital.....	Lincoln.....	1,100
JC Penney Co.	Omaha.....	1,100
Gallup Organization.....	Lincoln.....	1,100
Vishay Dale Electronics Inc.	Columbus.....	1,100
Kawasaki Motors Manufacturing Corp. USA.....	Lincoln.....	1,060
Physicians Mutual Insurance Co.....	Omaha.....	1,029
Faith Regional Health Services.....	Norfolk.....	1,020
Nebco Inc., Constructors Inc.	Lincoln.....	1,000
Duncan Aviation.....	Lincoln.....	1,000

²⁷ Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

Income and Earnings in Nebraska²⁸

	2001	2002	2003
INCOME²⁹			
Total Personal Income.....	\$49,300	49,872	52,755
Nonfarm earnings.....	36,479	37,659	39,347
Farm earnings.....	1,342	859	2,160
EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY³⁰			
Forestry, Fishing, and other ²⁸	149	146	149
Mining ²⁸	121	117	132
Construction.....	2,327	2,378	2,546
Manufacturing.....	4,684	4,816	4,953
Durable.....	2,315	2,302	2,344
Nondurable.....	2,369	2,514	2,610
Transportation and Warehousing.....	2,861	2,709	2,728
Wholesale Trade.....	2,072	2,090	2,133
Retail Trade.....	2,683	2,769	2,848
Finance and Insurance.....	2,555	2,693	2,868
Professional and Technical Services.....	2,242	2,788	2,381
Government and Government Enterprises.....	6,390	6,806	7,167
Federal, Civilian.....	1,012	1,054	1,123
Military ²⁸	620	704	779
State and Local.....	4,758	5,047	5,265

²⁸Figures are in millions of dollars, except "Forestry, Fishing, and other," "Mining" and "Military," which are in thousands of dollars. Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce.

²⁹Farm earnings consist of proprietors' net farm income, wages of hired farm labor, pay-in-kind and officers' salaries of corporate farms.

³⁰Earnings are the sum of wages and salaries, other labor income and sole proprietors' income.

Employment in Nebraska, 2007³¹

Industry	Average Number of Employees
Trade, Transportation and Utilities.....	191,471
Education and Health Services.....	113,076
Professional and Business Services.....	104,356
Manufacturing.....	101,140
Leisure and Hospitality.....	82,373
Financial Activities.....	63,970
Construction.....	49,369
Other Services.....	24,551
Information.....	19,183
Natural Resources and Mining.....	11,955
TOTAL PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.....	761,444
Local Government.....	106,165
State Government.....	32,587
Federal Government.....	15,940
TOTAL GOVERNMENT.....	154,692
TOTAL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INDUSTRY.....	916,136

³¹Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages in Nebraska, Nebraska Department of Labor, 2008